

Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel

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PEACH FESTIVAL TO RETURN THIS FALL



The annual Niagara County Peach Festival will return to Lewiston Sept. 9-12. (File photo by K&D Action Photo & Aerial Imaging)

Lewiston Kiwanis confirms plans for September happening

BY TERRY DUFFY
Editor-in-Chief

As announcements continue on the state level with regard to COVID-19 reopening plans and protocol changes, there's some upbeat news on the local level: The annual Niagara County (aka Lewiston Kiwanis) Peach festival is a go for this year.

The festival will open Thursday evening, Sept. 9, and continue throughout the weekend, with the closing Peach Queen crowning ceremonies Sunday evening, Sept. 12, in Lewiston's Academy Park.

Officials from the Kiwanis Club of Lewiston – operators of the longtime Lewiston favorite – stressed this week there will be some changes to abide by, with COVID-19 protocols. But, "We're definitely holding the Peach Festival," announced Jerry Wolfgang, Peach Festival advisory chair.

"There is no question," he said. "We missed last year because of COVID-19, and our plans are to have the full Peach Festival as we've had in the past. The only situation we have is that we need to monitor what the rules and

regulations are, that are coming from the governor as far as holding events.

"We're lucky because we have an event outdoors and, therefore, that gives us the opportunity to be able to space the field. That will be appropriate for a large gathering."

Festivalgoers will again be able to enjoy the Academy Park midway operated by Amusement Rides of America, dozens of expected vendors, and, of course, the famous peach shortcakes and festival foods.

But again, things will be adjusted as per COVID-19 guidelines, as necessary.

"We're going to meet (with the ride provider) to make sure (prior) to the festival, to map out the rides so there will be plenty of room between the rides, so as to eliminate any type of crowding, and keep the 6-foot (distance)," Wolfgang said.

Peach Festival Chairman Dean Beltrano said space considerations would determine the placement of both rides and midway games throughout Academy Park. He said the move of the Alphonso DiMino Memo-

rial Bandshell from the Center Street-Portage Road corner to the park's southwest corner across from Syros would afford Kiwanis room to work with on the field.

"Their rides are set normally with a larger distance than what we actually need, at 6 feet. They're set apart," Beltrano said. "The only thing we have to discuss with them is probably less of the midway games, because those are tacked one next to the other."

"With the field layout and the stage being moved – the bandshell – to the back corner, that affords us a little more space on the field that we can stretch out the vendors. And if we have to cut down, we're not going to lose a lot, because we have more space with the bandshell being in that back corner (near Syros) versus being in the front corner and everything having to go around it."

Wolfgang said the vendor count is still being reviewed.

"(Along with member) Rick Flores, who chairs the vendors on the field that rents space from

SEE KIWANIS, on Page 6

Former Page's Whistle Pig and Clancy's Restaurant site demolished



A former favorite food destination was demolished last week. (Photo courtesy of Gary Strenkoski)

Site to become Speedway gas station

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO
Tribune Editor

Last Thursday, demolition crews began tearing down the vacated structures located at 7001 Packard Road in the Town of Niagara. The location was most recently the site of Clancy's Restaurant. However, for many locals, the location will forever be remembered as the home of Page's Whistle Pig.

The site, which has been vacant since 2019, is set to become a Speedway gas station.

Town of Niagara Supervisor Lee Wallace said construction was "bittersweet."

"It was a great place when it was up and running and flourishing but, unfortunately, it has been an eyesore for a number of years now, and we're happy we can move forward with a new project," he said. "I think – even though a number of folks aren't happy with the Speedway – I think they're gonna like the sight of that more than what's been sitting there for a number of years."

Once the demolition began, many residents took to social media to share family photos and memories from the historic spot. Although the business was closed

for years, the memories, it seems, were still fresh.

"Gone but never forgotten," one commenter said.

"Making whistle pigs for dinner. Almost like a memorial dinner," said another.

In a phone call with the Tribune/Sentinel, Clancy's owner Don "DD" Spacone also shared nostalgia for the iconic location – not simply for the time he spent at the location managing his own restaurant, but also as a resident who enjoyed the Whistle Pig tradition growing up like so many others.

"I'm sad to see it go. We all went there when we were kids, going on the rides and all that. It was really the place to be when we were growing up," Spacone said.

After the demolition began, he said he was immediately inundated with calls from friends and neighbors who said they couldn't believe the site is actually gone.

"I was up to 40 phone calls of people calling me, and calling me and calling me: 'You won't believe what they're doing (to the Clancy's/Whistle Pig site). We gotta go – you think it's OK to go over there and get a brick?'"

SEE MANY, continued on Page 5

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